

AGENDA ITEM V

PROGRESS REPORT ON CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PROGRAM

NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

M.A. IN HERITAGE RESOURCES

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At its meeting of August 28, 2003, the Board of Regents acted as follows:

Conditional approval is granted for the proposed M.A. in Heritage Resources program (CIP 30.1202) at Northwestern State University. The implementation date of the program shall be decided after receipt of a progress report to be due June 1, 2004, documenting efforts of the University to address outstanding concerns. Additional progress reports may be required thereafter.

Specifically, the staff summary for this proposal included the following list of items to be addressed in subsequent progress reports and a broad timeline for accomplishing them:

<u>Year(s)</u>	<u>Activity</u>
2003-2004	1. Re-evaluate and revise the proposed curriculum
	2. Design a student recruitment plan
	3. Survey library resources and identify needed additions
2004-2005	4. Design new entrance requirements
2003-05	5. Hire three faculty at the associate level for this program

UNIVERSITY PROGRESS REPORT, AY 2003-2004

Northwestern submitted a progress report relative to further development of the M.A. program in Heritage Resources on May 18, 2004. Highlights of this report include:

A. Curricular Issues

In order to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the proposed degree program, the Department of Social Sciences must develop a more rigorous curriculum that includes graduate seminars in integrative theory and readings, integrative methods, integrative research, and cultural heritage resource management, as well as courses that develop substantive content

knowledge in the core disciplines of history, anthropology, and geography.

1. Integrative Courses: Two key seminars, (1) Research Methods and (2) Theory and Readings, will be two semester-long team taught courses, utilizing faculty from the four disciplines which constitute the core of the program: Anthropology, Geography, History, and Historic Preservation. These courses will focus on studies of sites that can then be used by the student in the creation of a final project which will be prepared by the student in the second year of the program.

Also offered in the second year of the program will be a two semester-long team taught Integrated Research Seminar, in which the student will study a heritage resource on a broad or a narrow scale and will demonstrate competence in utilizing theories and methods from the four core disciplines anchoring the proposed MAHR program.

2. Cultural Resource Management: This key course will be updated with increased emphasis on practical applications to work experiences. New faculty have been hired who have significant expertise in the application of CRM principles in professional, work-related settings.
3. Core Discipline Courses: Existing courses such as Oral History Methods, Historical Methods, Archives and Manuscripts Management, and the various courses covering specific historical periods are being updated to make them more rigorous and appropriate for practitioners in the field of Heritage Resources. A new Writing Techniques class will be developed for the proposed MAHR curriculum to expose students to the many types of written products (reports, grants, etc.) which will be expected of them. New courses in Geography are planned which will strengthen the offerings in that discipline. With the hiring of a new faculty member at the associate professor level the courses in historic preservation will be substantially expanded.
4. Internship: Faculty have spent several weeks examining the vital role of the internship experience in the program. Faculty are committed to assisting students in securing meaningful internship experiences and ensuring that experiences contribute to the successful completion of the degree. The School of Social Sciences will designate one of its faculty members associated with the proposed MAHR program as internship coordinator, who will be given appropriate consideration for teaching loads.
5. Oral Defense: An oral presentation of the student's final project will be incorporated into the program. The oral presentation will be in a capstone session of the Integrated Research Seminar in which all students will be required to present their research results to faculty and colleagues.

6. Portfolio: The student will complete a final project examining in detail a given heritage resource site, which will be presented to the faculty committee as well as others. The final project will examine a heritage resource utilizing the perspectives and tools of Anthropology, Geography, History, and Historic Preservation. The final project will build on work that comes from the Integrated Research Seminar which will be part of the second year of the student's experience in the proposed MAHR program.

B. Associated Campus Centers and Programs

1. Report: In the foreseeable future, NSU must fund a full director of the Williamson Museum and the Creole Heritage Center.
Response: This is included in the long term plan for the University.
2. Report: In the immediate future, NSU must fund support staff positions for the Williamson Museum, the Creole Heritage Center, and the Cultural Resources Office.
Response: This is included in the long term plans for the University.
3. Report: In the immediate future, NSU must provide at least partial funding for operating expenses of the Williamson Museum, the Creole Heritage Center, and the Cultural Resources Office.
Response: This is included in the long term plans for the University.
4. Report: The Editor of Southern Studies should create a multidisciplinary editorial board to guide and develop journal content.
Response: This has been completed.

C. External Relations

1. Report: The Department of Social Sciences should establish a formal cooperative agreement with several national based entities.
Response: The School of Social Sciences has formal agreements with entities such as the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, Cane River Creole National Historical Park, the Cane River National Heritage Area, all of which are a part of the National Park Service. In addition, the School has a formal agreement with the US Forest Service. The School of Social Sciences is expanding these agreements to include internship opportunities for graduate students in the proposed MAHR program.
2. Report: The Department of Social Sciences should seek to establish formal cooperative agreements with several locally important entities.
Response: The School of Social Sciences is developing agreements with numerous locally important entities. These entities include the Louisiana Office of State Parks, which manages three historic forts in the local area; the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches, which operates two historically significant house sites in the

area; the Historic District Landmarks Commission, which oversees development in the historic district of Natchitoches; and the Mainstreet Project which encourages sensitive development in the Natchitoches historic area.

C. University Financial Support

1. **Report**: NSU administration must provide the Department of Social Sciences with flexibility to hire new faculty at starting salaries in the range of \$45,000 to \$60,000 in order to hire at the associate level.
Response: The University advertised for and is hiring a coordinator for the proposed MAHR program at the associate professor level. The coordinator will possess extensive experience in material conservation and the built environment. As retirements in the School of Social Sciences occur, the University will examine the appropriateness of filling these positions at a level above that of assistant professor.
2. **Report**: NSU administration must provide the Department of Social Sciences with a minimum of 12 assistantships funded annually at \$10,000-\$12,000 each.
Response: The University has committed to provide adequate financial support for graduate students in the proposed MAHR program at the recommended level.
3. **Report**: NSU administration must provide each faculty member teaching in the program with a minimum of \$1,000 annually [for] professional development and travel.
Response: Faculty associated with the proposed MAHR program were provided with \$1,000 in travel and professional development money in the 2003-04 academic year. Faculty members attended interdisciplinary conferences such as the Creole Studies Conference and the ICOMOS conference, and several meetings of professional associations in History, Geography, and Anthropology. The School of Social Sciences purchased selected books in the core disciplines of Anthropology, Archaeology, Geography, History and Historical Preservation in order to broaden the interdisciplinary strengths of the faculty associated with the proposed MAHR program.
4. **Report**: NSU administration must increase the operating budget of the Department of Social Sciences to support recurring costs of equipment replacement.
Response: The NSU administration has developed a comprehensive plan to replace outdated equipment university-wide.
5. **Report**: NSU administration must increase start-up funds for computers, furniture, and the like to \$5,000 and make these funds available over a two-year period.
Response: The NSU administration made available \$5,000 of start up funds during 2003-04. An additional \$5,000 will be available in 2004-05.
6. **Report**: NSU administration must fund the on-campus centers that are key units of the support network for the proposed MAHR.
Response: The University has consistently expressed willingness to support on-

campus centers associated with the proposed MAHR.

D. Faculty

1. **Report**: All faculty involved in the proposed MAHR must meet the requirements for admission to graduate faculty status or, when appropriate, associate status.
Response: All faculty associated with the proposed MAHR program will meet this requirement by December 2004.
2. **Report**: Faculty teaching in the proposed program must have a maximum 3-3 teaching load.
Response: For 2004 the faculty in the proposed MAHR program will have a teaching load of 4-4. Starting in the Fall of 2005, with the arrival of the first graduate class in the MAHR program, the load will be reduced to 3-4. In the Fall of 2006 the load will be 3-3 for faculty associated with the MAHR program.
3. **Report**: The person appointed as director of the proposed MAHR not only must have tenure and full graduate faculty status but also must have a separate course reduction for program administration.
Response: The new graduate coordinator, hired at the associate professor level, will have a shortened tenure application period of two years, will be immediately eligible for temporary graduate faculty status, and will be eligible for full graduate faculty status within a year. The graduate coordinator will teach six hours per semester.
4. **Report**: Untenured faculty involved in this program must have adequate opportunities and resources for professional development and for scholarly production so they can prepare themselves for tenure and promotion.
Response: The university made available \$1,000 per faculty member for professional development in 2003-04. The university reduced the teaching load of faculty associated with the proposed MAHR program to provide opportunities for research and publication.
5. **Report**: One new faculty line must be created in History and one new faculty in Geography to provide a balanced faculty in the three core disciplines.
Response: One new faculty line in Geography was created and filled in Fall 2003. Another new faculty line in Historic Preservation was created and will be filled in Fall 2004. A retired faculty member in American History was replaced with an historian with an emphasis in local and oral history to strengthen the proposed MAHR program. Anticipated future retirements will be replaced by History faculty with strengths oriented towards the proposed MAHR program. An instructor position in History will be filled in 2004 to teach large introductory sections, freeing up further resources in History for the proposed MAHR program.

6. **Report:** In order to attract applicants with professional experience in cultural resources and with good potential for scholarly production, replacement and new faculty positions must be set at the associate level.

Response: The University will examine new and replacement positions in the School of Social Sciences for appropriateness of advanced levels in hiring.

E. Students

1. **Report:** The Team made numerous recommendations concerning minimum qualifications for students as well as in the application process.

Response: Social Sciences will incorporate where appropriate the recommendations by the Team concerning applications and admissions. The standards outlined by the External Review team are well within the criteria envisioned by the University and the School of Social Sciences.

2. **Report:** The assistantship level should be raised to between \$10,000 and \$12,000 per academic year.

Response: The University has consistently committed to funding assistantships at a competitive level.

3. **Report:** Assistantships should be structured to enhance students' professional development.

Response: The School of Social Sciences will ensure that assistantships meet the individual needs of the students. Assistantships will not be used for office work within the department, but will represent a meaningful experience for the student involving practical experience and/or cutting edge research by faculty.

4. **Report:** The number of incoming students should be limited until the faculty can support offering the full range of classes each year.

Response: The University will begin the program with a maximum of twelve students in Fall 2005. New students will be admitted only in the Fall semester to maintain program cohesion and to ensure that students will be able to complete the program in a timely fashion.

5. **Report:** The core faculty teaching in the proposed program should design a recruitment plan that will attract a diverse student body from a nationwide pool of applicants in the three core disciplines.

Response: An aggressive recruitment plan will be completed by Summer 2004 to attract student applications in Fall 2004 for a 2005 admission. The School of Social Sciences has the technical resources necessary to generate high quality brochures, mailings, and posters to recruit students on a national level.

F. Facilities and Services

1. **Report:** NSU administrators must commit a minimum of \$8,500 per year for five years to acquire new library materials to support the proposed program.
Response: The University library has consistently stated that resources will be purchased for the new program. In addition, resources at the Cammie Henry Research Center as well as the library at the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training will be available for graduate students as well as faculty in the proposed MAHR program.
2. **Report:** The Department of Social Sciences must develop a reasonable estimate of recurring costs for serial publications, new titles, and electronic databases needed to support the proposed program.
Response: The School of Social Sciences estimates that recurring costs for publications and databases for the proposed MAHR program will be manageable within the limits of the University budget.
3. **Report:** NSU administrators must commit adequate resources on a long-term basis for library materials of all kinds needed to sustain the program.
Response: University administrators and library staff have consistently stated that resources for the new program will be available.

STAFF SUMMARY

The University appears to be making significant progress toward addressing most external consultants' concerns; yet, more definitive responses are still needed with regard to faculty and student recruitment efforts, student admission requirements, student financial assistance, needed library resources, and external cooperative agreements. If the pace of needed changes and resources continues at the same rate during this coming year as has occurred during this past year, then the University's plans for a Fall 2005 implementation date appear reasonable. To assure that this expectation is met, however, an additional progress report should be required prior to implementation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee receive the AY 2003-2004 Progress Report from Northwestern State University Relative to Implementation of the M.A. Program in Heritage Resources. Given the current rate of progress toward meeting Regents' requirements, it is reasonable to project program implementation by Fall 2005. However, as a few problematic issues remain unresolved, an additional progress report shall be submitted to the Commissioner of Higher Education by June 1, 2005.